

Pawtucket School Committee Governance Work Session

Saturday, March 17, 2012

**8:00 AM – 12:00 PM School Administration Building, 2nd Floor
Conference Room**

286 Main Street, Pawtucket RI 02860

I Meeting will come to order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM.

a. Roll call

**Mr. Araujo-absent; Ms. Bonollo-here; Mr. Coughlin-arrived at 8:07 AM;
Mr. Noonan-here; Ms. Nordquist-absent; Mrs. Spooner-here; Mr.
Tenreiro-here**

**Also in attendance were Mrs. Deborah Cylke, Superintendent of
Schools and Mr. Skip Jenkins, Center for Reform School Systems.**

b. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Chairman, Mr. Tenreiro.

II Public Participation

None

III Discussion Items

1. Core Beliefs and Commitments

2. Vision

3. Theory of Action

**Note: This is a work session. Votes on any work will be taken at a
further regular or special meeting.**

**Mr. Jenkins: I'd like to show you a video in which Daniel Pain put
together a series of videos. He grew up and was educated in China.**

Mr. Jenkins showed the video of Sir Ken Robinson from YouTube

“Changing Education Paradigm.”

Mr. Jenkins asked what everyone saw in the video.

Mrs. Cylke: I saw rocketship schools, blended instruction staring to see changes.

Mr. Jenkins: MIT and Harvard had the brightest kids and they were passing tests but they didn't think they were getting it. Professors had them watch their lectures. The next day they discussed it, and it worked.

Kahn Academy in Connecticut was started because his niece was having problems in math.

Mr. Noonan: How practical is this to do in the public?

Mrs. Cylke: Very practical.

Mr. Noonan: What is a rocketship school?

Mrs. Cylke: Essentially a charter school. It's a public school in an urban district. You do not group by age and you have computers all over the classroom and it shows where the students are at academically. The students are coached as they go along. You have very young people running these schools so they don't have to think about feeding a family. It's a very innovative idea. It was started in San Jose California.

Mr. Jenkins: When we first put computers on teacher's desks there was resistance. They didn't want to use them. It was for data. Now it's entirely different. It took twenty years for setting expectations for teachers. Now they use them for resources and tools.

Mrs. Cylke: We are ten years behind at Tolman and Shea. They don't have that. They don't have those resources. That's huge. We need

to get that for them.

You go to Smithfield and they have “infinite campus.” We have MMS.

Mr. Jenkins: You can do what successful people are doing around the country.

The Case for Managed Instruction

- **Controlling what happens inside the classroom**
- **Aligning the classroom**
- **Intervening early in the child’s career**
- **Where are your effective teachers**

Find the places that need improvement and focus there.

Core Elements of Managed Instruction

- **Provide mentoring and training**
- **Appropriate professional development**
- **Principals closest communication to the community**
- **They can carry the message to the parents**

Mr. Noonan: What is the downsized to managed instruction?

Mr. Jenkins: Resistance. The teachers are not doing what they feel is appropriate. The consequences of not following managed instruction by the time they get to high school is we find we have a lot of dropouts because they are not prepared.

We have a society that relies on standardized testing. We have to find a way to engage them.

Mr. Coughlin: By the time we get to the freshmen year, how many came from Pawtucket?

Mrs. Cylke: That’s why we want to go to the National Core Curricula. Yes it’s a problem. We probably have around 50% that did not start in

kindergarten.

Mrs. Cylke: Our math problem at the elementary level. We are not very specific and we are using different lessons at each school. They don't have any books.

Mr. Jenkins: The starting key is managed instruction. When we talk about systems, we talk about how we talk about how we get adults to act. How do we use empowerment to get them to earn empowerment is an earned concept.

Managed Instruction = Strategic Transformation

- **Strategic transformation requires being intentional about decision-making authority.**
- **What types of decisions in a school system should be made centrally (i.e., “tightly managed” by district administration)?**
- **What types of decisions should be developed to individual schools (i.e., “loosely managed”)?**

Mrs. Cylke: Professional development for principals. In the larger districts they have principal academies.

Mr. Jenkins: We create that system that eyes are on that system. It's your responsibility as a board to make sure Debbie has the resources to make that happen. (i.e., bring up test scores and prevent them from going back down).

Mr. Tenreiro: The end goal is a clear plan that we all have the same talking points and create the urgency to close the achievement gaps.

Mr. Jenkins: We started with the PTA's and rotary clubs and play small snippets, basically what we have is not good enough. People will buy the passion if you're passionate about what you do.

The Case for Performance/Empowerment

- **Principals and teachers cannot fairly be held accountable for student achievement if they do not have significant control over their work.**
- **Responsibility and authority go together.**
- **Empowerment encompasses all the policies, systems, and practices that enable principals, teachers, and others in the system to control, to as large a degree as possible, the environment in which they do their work.**
- **The system as a whole will not benefit from new and innovative ideas without some level of flexibility for budget, hiring, and curriculum.**

Mr. Jenkins: The work you are doing motivates the adult when given the reigns to succeed or fail. You are given them before you show they can be trusted. Let people go and they will naturally rise to their very best.

Core Elements of Performance/Empowerment

Standards

- **Academic content and performance standards**
- **Business process standards (and vendor approval processes)**
- **Financial control and solvency standards**
- **Hiring standards**
- **Safety standards**
- **Ethical standards**
- **Parent and community satisfaction standards**
- **Guidelines for transfer and choice**

Core Elements of Performance/empowerment

Accountability

- **Identify important performance indicators.**
- **Measure performance using these indicators.**
- **Collect and distribute performance data.**
- **Establish weighted student funding or other site-based budgeting method to enable school to control purse strings.**
- **Apply predetermined consequences (rankings rewards, sanctions, and/or interventions) to schools and functional work units for achieving predefined outcomes.**

Decision-making Authority in a Managed Instruction District

- **Who is responsible for decisions concerning:**
 - o **School governance?**
 - o **School operations?**
 - o **Instruction?**

Mr. Tenreiro: We have mobility issues.

Ms. Bonollo: We will never reach our kids if we don't reach our teachers.

Mr. Spooner: The concept is they work for us and we work for them.

Mrs. Cylke: They want to be led and we want accountability. It's very doable.

The Case for Performance/Empowerment

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- Empowerment encompasses all the policies, systems, and practices that enable principals, teachers, and others in the system to control, to as large a degree as possible, the environment in which they do their work.
- The system as a whole will not benefit from new and innovative ideas without some level of flexibility for budget, hiring, and curriculum.

Mr. Jenkins: Empowerment is not sustainable without ability to continually hiring great leadership.

Dan says if you don't have managed instruction, you can't move to empowerment.

What we have to do for this system is have a core set of beliefs. What happens when we leave? I expect your conversations will change at the meetings.

When your constituents come forward, it's an opportunity to educate them.

Mrs. Cylke: I believe all kids can reach standards.

The Case for Managed Performance/Empowerment

- The system needs to own the technical core (reading, math, science).
- High-performing and high-improving schools should have more budget, hiring, and curricular flexibility.
- There has to be a balancing act between what to hold tight and what to let loose (academics, operations).

Core Elements of Managed Performance/Empowerment

- District-wide content and performance standards

- District-wide curriculum for every grade, subject, and course
- Coherent, aligned, and detailed curriculum down to individual lesson plans, teaching materials, and sample assessments
- Professional development for district curriculum
- Continuous evaluation of classroom performance
- Frequent formative assessments
- Comprehensive student information management systems

Mr. Jenkins: Professional development—how do you expect teachers to move forward if you don't provide the tools?

“Principals are held accountable for targeted professional development.”

Mrs. Cylke: If the superintendent and the school committee are not clear, we are not doing this to punish people. Then we are going to do a vote of “no confidence”. Likewise the teachers will put pressure on the superintendent. The new superintendent can't come in winging it. They are handed these beliefs and mission.

I work for you. Let's face it we are not going to agree on everything.

Core elements of managed performance/Empowerment

- Standards
- Accountability
- Flexibility-tied to:
 - o School performance (as indicated by test scores, attendance, graduation rates, etc.)
 - o Leadership experience and workforce capacity (e.g., experience and quality of teachers and principals)
 - o Grade level (elementary, middle, high school)

Mr. Jenkins: It's obvious that most is happening at the superintendent, school board and central office level. You don't have a policy in holding your people accountable.

Mrs. Cylke: Clearly these are some good things going on. Mathematics is all over the place. Common core is going to change. Our math team has been under utilized. The data presented to you was testing taken last year. I asked them to take a NECAP analysis from last year. The decline starts very early.

An example of policy is all teachers will assess writing using rubrics.

Mr. Noonan: Would you write those?

Mrs. Cylke: I would recommend them.

Mr. Spooner: Algebra I. Our kids take that in what grade? Grade 9? I took that in grade 7.

Mr. Tenreiro: Hopefully it will result in some research.

Mrs. Cylke: There will be a clear plan that Pawtucket kids will learn to write. The basics are reading, writing and math.

Mr. Jenkins: There is a standard of governance that provides you with the standards of hiring who you want.

Mr. Joseph Knight arrived at 11:08 AM.

Mrs. Cylke: Rhode Island is a Race to the Top winner.

Mr. Noonan: What is our policy now for professional development?

Mrs. Cylke: Where are our teachers now? Where are they scoring low? We're financed about \$5,000 less per student than other districts. We try to squeeze every dollar out of our federal budget.

Data drives that where are we spending on math? I was told it's not there.

Mr. Tenreiro: We need measurable goals on professional development.

Mrs. Cylke: Only you as a committee have the authority to make policy.

Any time you want to change or make policy you can.

Mr. Noonan: When someone wants to attend a seminar, who makes that decision?

Mrs. Cylke: Kim has been making those decisions.

Mr. Noonan left at 11:15 AM.

Mr. Jenkins: In your mind, what campuses are performing?

Ms. Bonollo: I don't think we are ready. We don't have a formalized structure in place so who can we empower if we don't have standards in place?

Mr. Spooner: I believe that, Joanne and I believe that Debbie has a plan in place and meeting with everyone one on one is great.

Mr. Tenreiro: Minimal compliance with minimal staff will bring results.

Mrs. Cylke: I don't want to see the school committee as seven people with four votes. I see a lot of power that I don't have, but together I see us moving together. We need to bring coherence and co-drivers and work on what's urgent and important and not have lengthy discussion on what's not important.

My hope is that together we move forward with reform policy. We're going to build our people and not play the blame game.

There may be something I bring forward and it is not going to pass. Let's move forward. These are our core beliefs and this is how we do

our work. This is our one voice. Seven people are not going to always agree. I believe what Ray said we can be a high performing district.

We need to study other districts in the same boat as us. If managed instruction is working in urban districts, we need to pay attention to that.

Mr. Jenkins: Managed instruction needs to be the main core and then we can add empowerment.

Managed empowerment is saying we're giving our kids a choice. We're not there. Would it be appropriate to give you these documents to come up with some managed instruction and try coming up with some campuses?

Mr. Tenreiro: I think there are a lot of statements here and we can take them and do some wordsmithing.

The chairperson is really just the facilitator of our meeting.

I think the process has helped us come together more.

Mrs. Cylke: I don't want this to be perceived as Debbie's stuff. It has to be ours. The current strategic plan was driven academically by RIDE.

IV Adjournment

Mr. Coughlin moved to adjourn. Ms. Bonollo seconded.

Voice vote carried all in favor.

The Chairman adjourned the Pawtucket School Committee work session on Saturday, March 17, 2012 at 11:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clerk

APPROVED 5/15/12